

UNDERSTANDING UNMET TRANSPORTATION NEEDS IN THE GREATER HOLLAND AREA



A MULTI-STAGE COMMUNITY STUDY

Prepared for:
THE TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH PROJECT ACTION TEAM

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HOPE COLLEGE

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I. Introduction

The Carl Frost Center for Social Science Research was hired by Disability Network/Lakeshore to work with an Action Team on a Transit Research Project. The goal of the research was to “identify and prioritize unmet transportation needs in the cities of Holland and Zeeland and the townships of Holland, Zeeland, Laketown, Park and Fillmore.” To conduct this research, a multiple-stage process was developed by the Action Team with support from Frost Research Center staff. Research results from one stage informed the development of the data collected at the next. Data collection stages included (in order):

- An online survey of stakeholders,
- Seven stakeholder focus groups,
- Telephone interviews with individuals facing unmet transportation needs from each of the seven municipalities,
- A paper survey of residents with unmet transportation needs, and
- A telephone survey of taxpayers on transportation issues.

The results of this research are to be presented to the general community through a charrette format to jumpstart discussion between invited community members on the prioritization of community transportation needs and to brainstorm solutions that will better meet these needs in the seven municipalities targeted for the research.

This report presents the summary findings for all research stages. Planning for this project began in fall of 2006. Data for this project (all research stages) was collected from April until December 2007.

II. Research Results

A. Stakeholder Online Survey

To begin a discussion of understanding existing community needs related to unmet transportation, an online survey was developed and distributed to community members identified by the action team as those who work with people having unmet transportation needs and those responsible for making decisions about public transportation in the community. Participants represented local agencies serving people with transportation needs, government representatives, church leaders, and local employers. To access the survey, participants were given the URL and asked to take the time to complete it. Survey data was collected between March and April of 2007. A copy of the survey is provided in Appendix A.

Eighty-one people completed the survey, representing: church/faith-based organizations (21); governments (11); senior or health care organizations (8); small (8) and large (4) employers; education (6); transit providers (5); organizations serving disabled/low income community members (4); and temporary employment agencies (3).

When asked what groups with unmet transportation needs their organization could represent, respondents identified...

- Individuals with low income (39.5%),
- Seniors (38.3%),

- Employees (37.0%),
- Clients/consumers (33.3%),
- Individuals with physical disabilities (33.3%),
- Taxpayers (29.6%),
- Individuals with developmental disabilities (27.2%),
- Members/ parishioners (27.2%),
- Individuals with severe mental illness (24.7%), and
- Students (16.0%).

Thus, stakeholders identified themselves as representatives speaking for a variety of community residents in need of transportation services.

When asked how their organizations met community member or clients/consumers of their organization's services, the most popular responses were:

- 32.1% said through the use of MAX,
- 27.2% said through the use of volunteers, and
- One-third (33.3%) said they do not provide or pay for public transportation.

When asked about the money invested by their organization or through the government on public transportation for the 2006 fiscal year, respondents reported a total of \$4,538,694, with two contributors responsible for \$2,200,000 (48.5%) of this total. Total rides provided were reported at 2,294,021, with the two largest contributors providing an estimated 2,000,000 (87.2%) of these rides. Respondents said they knew 4,890 people who had experienced an unmet transportation need within the past twelve months.

Respondents said that the problem of unmet transportation needs creates...

- An inability to provided needed services (44.4%),
- Decreased participation in programs (39.5%),
- Lost jobs (18.5%),
- An inability to employ (14.8%),
- Decreased productivity (13.6%), and a
- Decreased pool of employees (12.3%).

When asked why transportation needs are often unmet, respondents said...

- The bus does not cover needed geography (48.1%),
- The cost of owning/maintaining a vehicle is prohibitive (46.9%),
- Clients have no family/friends willing to drive (44.4%),
- Clients don't have a license (40.7%), and that
- The bus has insufficient hours (30.9%) and days (23.5%) scheduled to run.

When asked how much the people they work with having unmet transportation needs might be willing to pay for such services...

- 19.2% said \$1 or less,
- 23.3% said between \$1 and \$2, and
- 43.8% said they did not know.

When asked where people needed to go but couldn't reach due to lack of transportation, respondents identified...

- Work (17.2%),
- Medical appointments (14.8%), and
- Other destinations such as grocery (8.6%) or retail stores (7.4%), court (7.4%), and schools (7.4%).

Many respondents (34.2%) also identified the role of the season on transportation needs, with most identifying winter when transit needs are the greatest. The top three areas ranked as having the greatest unmet transit needs were Holland Township, Zeeland Township, and Park Township. Holland Township and Holland City were identified by most as the number 1 area having the greatest unmet transportation needs.

When asked to rank a set of provided factors according to which would have greatest impact on improving unmet needs, 88.9% responded. Of these respondents, 59.3% ranked as #1 in impact:

- Expand transit services to new areas.

Asked to rank the top three factors that would have the greatest impact on meeting transportation needs in the existing transit service area, 86.4% responded. The top two factors for this group were:

- Expand geographic area covered (48.1%), and
- Increase hours of service (25.9%).

Finally, respondents were asked how important they felt the need for Regional transit would be in the next three years. One hundred percent said this need would be at least "somewhat important" with two-thirds (69.7%) indicating it will be "very important." No respondents said it will be "not at all important."

Results from this initial online survey provided some important insight into the current state of public transportation being provided in the community and the stakeholder perception of what people in the community face unmet transportation needs, how this issue impacts the work of their organization, and how this issue can be improved to be best utilized by those in the most need. Results were summarized and used as a tool to elicit more in-depth discussion of these issues by stakeholders through a series of focus groups.

B. Stakeholder Focus Groups

In May 2007, the results of the online stakeholder survey were shared with additional community stakeholders through a series of focus groups. The purpose of the groups was to obtain feedback on the survey results and collect more in-depth information on community priorities for community transportation needs. Specifically, groups were asked to discuss: the survey results in comparison to the needs they saw faced by their customers, clients, or employees; improvements they would like to see to current transportation options; the potential impact of such improvements on their organizations, businesses, or the local economy; funding options; how the researchers could best access individuals with unmet transportation needs; and how stakeholders preferred to be informed of the project results. Results from the first six groups were analyzed and then used to frame the discussion in the

seventh group, composed of representatives of Education, Government, Tourism, and the Environmental interest groups. The Interview Protocol tool is located in Appendix B.

The groups were held at the Frost Research Center at Hope College in May 2007 and moderated by Dr. Deborah Sturtevant, Chair of the Sociology and Social Work Department. At this time, she was also Interim Director of the Frost Research Center. Data was recorded by note-takers present at each group. Additionally, one member from the Action Team was at each group as an observer. Groups included (number at each group in parentheses):

- Small and temporary employers (5),
- Transit providers (10),
- Court representatives (2),
- Senior and health care organization representatives (8),
- Large employers (3),
- Human service organization representatives (5), and
- Education, government, tourism, and environment interest groups representatives (12).

Participants were first asked to discuss their reaction to the survey and to speak to what transportation needs “look like” for the area. Most said people have unmet transportation needs because...

- Public transit does not take them where they need to go,
- People may not have a license or a dependable automobile, and
- Gas prices and taxi rides are too expensive.

Additionally...

- Participants felt the need for expanded regional transportation, throughout Ottawa County and to surrounding counties,
- Most were very knowledgeable about the history and current issues of transit facing the community,
- All said that transportation was an issue for people with whom they work, and
- Most identified the need to go to work and to medical appointments as the source of transportation need.

In response to the survey results on transportation needs for employment activities, participants discussed...

- How employees need to access the Macatawa Area for employment,
- Job loss due to the inability to travel to employment destinations, and
- Problems with the current public transportation system.

Regarding the current public transportation system, participants across groups discussed how it does not meet the needs of many employees as...

- It does not run early or late enough to accommodate work schedules,
- The 1-hour pick-up window is inconvenient,
- Traveling in winter is difficult,
- Drop-offs are late and people receive reprimands as a result, and
- It does not accommodate same-day requests needed by temporary, shift-paid employees (the employee population identified as having the greatest need).

In response to the survey results identifying needed transportation to medical appointments, stakeholders said people in the Macatawa area need...

- Access to medical facilities/appointments in Grand Rapids, Muskegon, and Kalamazoo (e.g. kidney dialysis, specialist appointments), and
- Better medical transportation for seniors and people with disabilities (citing an unpredictable bus, appointments running late, and the need for assistance with medical equipment or other travel support).

Regarding court-related engagements, stakeholders said people in Ottawa County...

- Need to reach the courthouse in Grand Haven,
- Need rides from the Grand Haven or Fillmore corrections complex to other parts of Ottawa County once they are released from jail/prison,
- May not have a license or cannot afford to reinstate their license (e.g. due to the driver responsibility fee), and that
- A \$1 bus pass is often not affordable for people recently released from jail/prison as they have not been working.

In addition, stakeholders believe there is a need for transit expansion within the Macatawa Area, throughout Ottawa County and especially to Allegan County to provide access to day programs/services for many different populations. They also said transit expansion in the Macatawa Area would...

- Provide more tourism opportunities for boaters and other visitors to the community (to go from marina areas to downtown/shopping areas),
- Provide access to Sunday church services, and
- Support attendance at after school activities by school children.

When asked to identify the issues affecting the ability of the community to meet these identified transportation needs, participants discussed...

- Transit providers having to turn people away because of capacity, geographic limitations, or other issues,
- Decreasing state and federal funding for such services, and
- An overall lack of funding available to support both public and private services.

Regarding the issue of funding, participants said that...

- An uncoordinated system currently exists due to funding restrictions on the populations to be serviced/type of transit provided,
- Organizations try to fill existing gaps with volunteer programs, voucher systems, or budgetary allocations for transit, and that
- Rising gas prices could lead to reductions in service or impact volunteer providers, many of whom are not reimbursed for fuel consumption.

When asked what changes or improvements they believed would best address these transit needs (using the online survey results as a starting point for comparisons), most agreed with the results and supported...

- Public transportation expansion within Ottawa County and to surrounding counties (Muskegon, Grand Rapids, Allegan, and Kalamazoo),
- An affordable, on-call transit service to fill the gaps where public transit is not ideal (e.g. vans, shuttles).

They said that next steps towards change could include...

- Educating the public about existing transportation options and their use,
- Marketing information in a format that is easily accessible, readable, and expressed in multiple languages,
- Researching transit systems in other communities to look for innovative ways to meet the community's transit needs,
- Investigating alternative payment options (e.g. swipe cards),
- Researching Ottawa County funding to determine the most cost effective and efficient way to consolidate resources and meet transit needs,
- Investigating transportation partnership opportunities between organizations and/or businesses,
- Investigating a carpooling system/informal transportation network, and
- Providing transit vouchers to organizations for people in need.

Most did not know how these services could be paid for, although a few ideas were to...

- Apply for JARC funds,
- Implement local fundraising efforts to pay for vouchers,
- Create organizational partnerships where businesses/organizations purchase their own vans,
- Consolidate resources,
- Encourage employer participation,
- Rely on local government through increased taxes,
- Increase user costs/fees, and
- Look for other grant resources.

Overwhelmingly, stakeholders felt that one-on-one, on-site surveys would be the best way to communicate with the people they work with. Some other suggestions were to...

- Attach brief surveys to check stubs (employers),
- Share databases (if organization has list of people with transit needs),
- Conduct on-board passenger surveys (transit providers),
- Hold individual on-site surveys, or
- Hold on-site group interviews or focus groups.

Participants asked to be informed about research results by email. They also said they would like a tool that enables them to share research results with elected officials, funders, and other stakeholders.

Overall, participants in this second stage of the research process supported and expanded upon the results initially gathered from the stakeholder email survey. While agreeing that unmet transportation needs exist in the community and that regional transit issues were important to them, they also provided the Action Team with in-depth detail on the reasons for existing unmet transportation needs (transportation, medical, court-related, disability-related), offered suggested changes to improve this problem, mentioned ideas for funding such changes, and informed the researchers of the best way to access people with unmet transportation needs as well as identified what they needed back from the Team regarding the research process to use for their own strategic planning. These results were used to inform the approach taken to solicit feedback from people with unmet transportation needs. Thus, the next stage of the research process was to conduct one-on-one interviews with individuals with unmet transportation needs from each of the seven municipalities being studied, and use these results to develop a broader survey of people facing such needs.

C. Individual Interviews

Individuals selected for one-on-one interviews by telephone were identified by those who had attended the focus groups as well as by Action Team members. During the last two weeks of August, a research assistant with the Frost Center made telephone calls to fifteen persons (or their caregivers) with unmet transportation needs. Three of the interviewees lived in Holland Township, while the rest of the interviews were composed of two people from each of the other six municipalities. The interviewer asked each respondent about the options they and their family currently have for transportation, what they like or dislike about these options, changes to transportation that would improve their life, ideal solutions to their transportation status, and the most they would be willing to pay for increased transportation options. A copy of the survey is located in Appendix C.

Results indicate that...

- Most respondents (73.3%) were female,
- 53.3% were under 30, 33.3% were 31-60 years old, and 13.3% were over 60 years old,
- 66.7% were white,
- 50% had incomes above the poverty line and 50% had incomes below this line,
- 53.3% were permanently disabled,
- 26.7% needed special assistance or accessibility features for transportation, and
- 33.3% were currently employed.

On transportation needs...

- Half (53.3%) said immediate family provided their rides to medical appointments, and
- 60% required transportation to other locations than medical appointments, church, shopping, or school.

Respondents said that an expanded area covered by public transportation would make their life easier. Additionally, they noted that friends and family are not always available, that sometimes the weather prevents them from walking or biking to get to where they need to go, and that they do not want to be a nuisance to their friends or family by having to depend on them because it causes people to juggle their schedules and that these supports can only

provide limited help. They also noted that the public transportation, although helpful, are sometimes late or that the cost or needing to call ahead prohibits them from regularly using such a service.

These interview results were used in the creation of a survey that was distributed to a much wider number of individuals in the community who self-identified as having experienced unmet transportation needs.

D. The “Need a Ride” Survey

To gather a wide range of feedback on unmet transportation needs in the areas being studied, the Action Team used the results of the one-on-one interviews to create (with help from Frost Research center staff) a survey that could be distributed to residents of the Greater Holland Area. Having “unmet transportation needs” was defined as having “had ANY transportation problems in the past year that kept you from getting where you needed to go.” Surveys were administered in English and Spanish to individuals self-identifying as having experienced unmet transportation needs at various community agencies and local government offices. Surveys were also mailed to Community Mental Health clients and included in Manpower pay envelopes. A few people also heard about the project by radio or newspaper and requested surveys. Information was collected about the times and places transportation was needed, transit preferences, and transportation currently being used. An incentive was provided to encourage completion of this survey: five \$100 gift cards were distributed to five randomly selected respondents. Data was collected from September through October 2007. A copy of the survey is located in Appendix D.

More than 600 residents of Holland City, Zeeland City, Holland Township, Zeeland Township, Park Township, Laketown Township and Fillmore Township participated in this study. Over half (58%) were female, 30% were under 30 years of age, 43% were between the ages of 30 and 49, 56% lived with at least one other adult needing transportation, 33% had one or more children also in need of transportation services, and the majority came from the City of Holland (48%) or Holland Township (23%).

Results demonstrate that...

- Many respondents had special needs impacting their transportation.
 - Half (50%) required an accessible vehicle when traveling, and
 - 29% needed some personal assistance when they travel.

When asked where they needed to go but did not have rides to get there, the most frequently indicated destinations were...

- Work (39%),
- Medical appointments (38%), and
- Shopping/grocery (33%).

Most frequently identified locations respondents needed help reaching were in...

- Ottawa County (48%),
- Kent County (18%),
- Allegan County (18%), and
- Muskegon County (11%).

Findings related to transportation costs were that...

- A little over half (56%) said transportation would be affordable for them if a one-way ride in the Greater Holland area cost \$1 or \$.50,
- Residents needing accessible vehicles or personal assistance were more likely than those who didn't to indicate that \$4-5 per ride was affordable, and
- Respondents 40 to 59 years old were more likely to indicate that \$1 or less was affordable, while younger and older age groups were able to afford more.

Most respondents said they needed rides...

- Monday through Friday between 6 a.m. and 10 a.m. (33-35%), and
- Monday through Friday 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. (28-31%).

Two out of five respondents (41%) said lack of transportation had prevented them from looking for, getting, or keeping a job in the past year.

Asked if they had a choice of public transit options...

- Half (51%) preferred using Demand Response/Reserve a Max, while
- One-quarter (26%) preferred Fixed routes/Catch a Max.

The top 5 potential solutions to meet respondent transportation needs were...

- Public transportation that goes where/when needed (61%),
- Gas money (50%),
- Money for bus passes, taxi rides, etc. (43%), and
- Car insurance (36%).

When asked how participants were currently resolving their unmet transportation needs...

- 50% use friends, family or neighbors as resources,
- 30% use the MAX /Allegan County Transportation,
- 10% use Good Samaritan/Love Inc., and
- One-quarter (25%) said they make use of other options.

These results provide valuable insights to assessing the level of unmet transportation needs in the Greater Holland Area and put a face to the community members experiencing unmet needs. Through this survey, the Action team was also able to identify existing barriers to accessing reliable, affordable transportation, and the solutions that would best meet respondent needs. Specifically, most people self-identifying as having unmet transportation needs use informal, "natural" supports such as friends or family rather than use a public service that costs them money. Additionally, many faced unmet needs due to the need for special assistance while using public transportation. Most said that an expanded geographic area reached by public transportation services or money to support their being transported would be top solutions to meeting their transportation needs. Overall, this research enabled the Action Team to structure a response to the problem of unmet transportation needs in a manner that included the voices of those in the most need.

E. The Taxpayer Survey

The final step of this research project was a telephone survey of taxpayers from the seven municipalities in order to understand their views on public transportation concerns facing their communities. Administrators from the municipalities were invited to a meeting to review the survey draft and make suggestions for the final version. The survey asked participants to discuss their opinions on the level of traffic congestion in their communities and how it could best be addressed, the level to which they perceive a need for improved public transportation services in their area, the level of unmet transportation needs in their area, who they think would most benefit from public transportation services, their personal use of this service, and what improvements to public transportation or transportation programs they might support through their tax dollars. Due to the small size of Fillmore Township compared to the other municipalities, it was decided to conduct around 720 surveys in order to reach 50 in Fillmore Township while keeping the proportions approximate to the population of the seven areas. A total of 799 surveys were completed. Data was collected in November 2007. A copy of the survey is in Appendix E of this report.

Results of this survey on traffic congestion demonstrate that:

- Traffic congestion is not considered a big problem for any surveyed areas, and
- Most felt that public transportation and carpooling opportunities are most effective at eliminating any congestion.

Regarding public transportation options in their community...

- Most did not currently consider this an important issue to address, but
- Most said this issue would be important to their communities within 3 years.

Populations most in need of public transportation/transportation programs were identified as...

- People with disabilities (73.0%),
- People with low incomes (65.0%), and
- Seniors (58.1%).

Most said they depend on friends or family for rides to where they need to go, rather than public transportation or other options. Very few utilized the MAX service.

Less than half had themselves or had known someone who faced an unmet transportation need within the past year. Of those that had, the most frequently identified causes were...

- Lack of access to a reliable car (53.4%),
- Lack of a valid driver's license (28.0%), or
- Lack of public transportation in their area or where they needed to go (14.8%).

When asked if they or their family members would use public transportation if it were available, over half (59.3%) said they were "not at all likely" to use this service, and close to the same number (58.2%) said their family members were also "not at all likely" to use such a service.

When read a list of challenges that public transportation or transportation programs are supposed to address in communities, and asked how important they felt each challenge was to their community, people selected as important...

- Helping people with disabilities get jobs (81.9%),
- Transporting seniors to medical facilities (80.7%), and
- Helping people transition from welfare to work (75.7%).

People felt their tax dollars should either go to transporting seniors to medical facilities (31.0%), to helping people with disabilities get jobs (24.0%), or to no services at all (23.3%).

While most felt that the transportation issues they had identified as important should be addressed within 3 years, only one-third (36.8%) supported a small investment (\$25 or less) in supporting such changes. However, a large majority (73.6%) said they would support a transportation program through a homeowners tax, provided that the following information was made available to them:

- A detailed plan for changes (accessibility, oversight, scheduling, routes, dependability, efficiency and environmental impact),
- General cost of such a plan,
- Examples of plans and changes in comparable communities, and
- The level of existing community need for such services.

Additional comments indicate that participants felt this is an important topic that they would consider supporting, but many saw no current need for changes or considered the cost of changes to be prohibitive. Most wanted to see the need for change to be demonstrated and also expressed that they view the MAX system as either inefficient or underutilized.

The results of this survey point to some different understandings between taxpayers and the other groups surveyed in the research project on who faces such unmet needs and the extent to which it should be addressed through taxpayer dollars or other community resources. Specifically, taxpayers were more likely to view those in need of transportation to be individuals who are seniors, have low incomes, or have a disability, while employees (temporary or long-term) were not identified as a group experiencing unmet transportation needs. Additionally, the taxpayer group was much more likely to use friends or family for transportation rather than use the public system. Most also viewed the public system as both inefficient and underutilized. In this sense, this group did agree with the others that the public system needs improvement, but also felt the need for more education on the issue before they could determine their level of support for change. Clearly, this group is one that should be the focus of targeted marketing messages and educational outreach in order to increase support for making improvements to transportation in the community.

III. Project Summary

This research project effectively captured multiple viewpoints on the issue of unmet transportation needs in the seven municipalities surveyed. Each stage was constructed from the results provided from the previous one and overall, the information provides a systematic and reliable picture of the nature to which unmet transportation needs exist in the area, who it impacts, and how these needs can be best addressed taking into consideration the concerns of taxpayers and community leaders, as well as the voices and concerns of those who need the services the most. Overall, results indicate that most respondents recognize that certain populations face unmet transportation needs in the community. In the past twelve months stakeholders were aware of close to 5,000 individuals who had unmet needs. Over 600 individuals responded to the Need a Ride survey, and of them, 50% needed an accessible vehicle and 29% needed personal assistance when traveling. Transportation was most needed for work, medical appointments and shopping/grocery, and over half of respondents needed it to cost only \$.50 or \$1.00. Taxpayers felt that public transportation would be an important issue in the community in the next three years and about three-fourths would support a transportation program through a homeowners tax.

Most feel the current public transportation system is ineffective due to its time and geographic service constraints and that these services should be expanded to eliminate these constraints. Additionally, the current climate for funding such services creates an uncoordinated approach that relies increasingly on volunteers to fill the gaps existing in service to those that need it the most. Top groups identified as facing unmet transportation needs were short-term employees, seniors, people with low incomes, and people with disabilities.

While taxpayers and those self-identifying as facing unmet transportation needs both indicated they have experienced this problem in their lives, taxpayers were less likely to need to rely on public transportation than individuals completing the “Need a Ride” survey, and they also indicated their family members were less likely to do so. While taxpayers relied heavily on family and friends to help them get to where they needed to go, people completing the “Need a Ride” survey were less likely to have family and friends who had no unmet transportation needs – most lived with family members who also faced these unmet needs. In this sense, the problem of unmet transportation needs can be seen as mediated by the context of an individual’s home environment. For many, the problem of having unmet transportation needs is not just an individual one – it impacts their entire family. This may be an issue that deserves further consideration in Action Team planning for educating the community and developing community solutions.

IV. Toward the Future

Based on these findings, the Transit Research Project Action Team might consider the following activities to address unmet transportation needs and obstacles to resolving such needs in the community:

- Encourage a comprehensive approach that coordinates already existing services and organizations,
- Address transportation solutions that respond to multiple unmet transportation needs across individuals or families,
- Investigate multiple funding options to support any initiative,
- Conduct a cost/benefit analysis for expanding MAX services,
- Focus improvements to increase access to transportation in Ottawa County,
- Determine what populations have chronic rather than sporadic unmet transportation needs and prioritize advocacy for increased services to those with chronic needs, and
- Investigate current MAX/Allegan County Transportation user rates to understand how this service can be better utilized.

Additionally, the researchers suggest that the Action Team consider providing residents with the following information in order to increase awareness of public transportation needs and services and to better inform community-wide decisions on such issues:

- People most in need of public transportation in their communities,
- Messages that describe the problem at the individual, family, and community level (e.g. impact on employment or tourism),
- Top reasons why most people experience unmet transportation needs,
- MAX user rates,
- A demonstrated need to improve transportation services,
- Successful examples of public transportation changes made to comparable communities,
- Detailed plans on any proposed changes that would impact taxpayer dollars, and
- Public discussion of this issue in the community.

The final stage of this research process will be implemented on March 18th, 2008. At this time, the research results will be presented through a charrette to a group of community members invited to the presentation by the Action Team. At this meeting, the findings will be used to facilitate individual networking and a discussion of the best community response to this issue. By starting this conversation with the community, the Transit Research Project Action Team can position itself to respond to community transportation needs based upon the concerns identified by this research process and thus strengthen the group's effectiveness at raising awareness and educating residents about public transportation issues in their community. Overall, these activities should increase community support and funding for improved public transportation services as well as identify creative alternative options that will provide additional support to those in need.

Appendix A – Transportation Stakeholder Survey

Welcome to the transportation stakeholder survey!

As you know, a research project is underway in the Macatawa area to identify and prioritize unmet transportation needs. Your input will be invaluable throughout this project.

The data you provide in this survey will be compiled and analyzed by the Frost Research Center at Hope College. It will also be shared with Ottawa County, which is conducting a countywide transit needs assessment. Therefore, your responses will be used to evaluate and understand local and countywide transportation issues so solutions can be sought.

(Next)

The following survey contains approximately 20 questions about transportation needs. The survey should take no more than 15 minutes to complete.

Participation is completely voluntary. All individual responses will be kept anonymous.

(Previous) (Next)

1. In order to ensure only one response is given per organization, please fill out the information below. Neither the name of the respondent nor the organization will be attached to any specific responses you give in the survey. (Response is required for the first four items.)

Name of organization _____
Address of organization _____
Name of respondent _____

Work phone _____
Email _____

Please indicate what type your organization is:

Transit Provider
Senior or Health Care Organization
Organization serving people with disabilities and low incomes
Court-Related
Education
Tourism-Related
Government

Church or faith-based organization
Environmental Agency
Chamber of Commerce
Temporary Employment Agency
Small Employer
Large Employer
Other, Please specify

(Previous) (Next)

2. What municipalities in the Macatawa area does your organization serve? (Please select all that apply.)

Fillmore Township	Holland City	Holland Township	Laketown Township	Park Township	Zeeland City	Zeeland Township
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3. My organization is completing this survey to represent the transit needs of _____. (Please select all that apply.)

Students	Individuals with low incomes
Employees	Individuals with severe mental illness
Clients/Consumers	Individuals with developmental disabilities
Members/Parishioners	Individuals with physical disabilities
Taxpayers	Other, please specify _____
Seniors	

4. Currently, how is your organization meeting people's transportation needs? (Please select all that apply.)

Volunteers	Saugatuck/Douglas Interurban Transit
Taxis	In-house transit system
Voucher program	We do not provide or pay for any type of transportation
Macatawa Area Express (MAX)	Other, please specify _____
Pioneer Resources	
Allegan County Transportation (ACT)	

5. In fiscal year 2006, how much did your organization spend on providing transportation for people?

\$ _____

6. In fiscal year 2006, how many rides did your organization provide?

Number of rides _____

7. How do unmet transportation needs affect your organization? (Please select all that apply.)

Lost revenue	Decrease pool of employees
Lost jobs	Decreased pool of volunteers
Decreased productivity	Does not affect the organization
Decreased participation in programs	Don't know
Inability to employ people	Other, Please specify _____
Inability to get people services they need	

8. In the past twelve months, approximately how many people has your organization worked with who have unmet transportation needs?

Number of people _____

9. Of the people you work with who have unmet transit needs, why are their needs unmet? (Please select all that apply.)

Too costly to own and maintain a car	Bus does not cover needed geography
Don't have vehicle with wheelchair lift	Don't know how to use public transit
Unsafe/bad experience on bus	Gas prices too high
No family/friends in area willing to drive	Don't have a license
Bus has insufficient days	Don't know
Bus has insufficient hours	Other, please specify _____

10. Of the people you work with, what days and times do people need transit when it's not available? (Please select all that apply.)

6:00am - 9:59am	10:00am - 1:59pm	2:00pm - 5:59pm	6:00pm - 9:59pm	10:00pm - 1:59am	2:00am - 5:59am
-----------------	------------------	-----------------	-----------------	------------------	-----------------

Monday

Tuesday ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Wednesday

Thursday ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Friday

Saturday ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Sunday

☐ Don't know

11. In the past year, were there any destinations in West Michigan that people you worked with needed to go, but because of a lack of transit could not reach?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know ☐

12. If you answered "Yes" to question #11, please specify what places people needed to go but could not reach by listing the exact names of destinations.

Work _____	Social service agency _____
School _____	Church _____
Grocery store _____	Court _____
Retail store _____	Social/recreational _____
Medical appointment _____	Other _____

13. What is the maximum amount people you work with would be able to pay for one (1), one-way ride to get where they needed to go in the Macatawa area?

\$1.00 or less	\$4.01 - \$5.00
\$1.01 - \$2.00	\$5.01 - \$6.00
\$2.01 - \$3.00	Over \$6.00
\$3.01 - \$4.00	Don't know

14. Does your organization notice any seasonal trends when transit needs are greatest?

Yes

No

Don't know

15. If you answered "Yes" to question #14, in what season do people you work with have the greatest unmet transportation needs? (Please select all that apply.)

Spring

Fall

Summer

Winter

16. From your organization's experience, what areas do you believe have the greatest unmet transportation needs? Please rank order the top three areas with the greatest unmet transit needs and **PLEASE use each number only ONCE**. 1 = greatest unmet need

1 2 3 Not top three

Fillmore Township

Holland City

Holland Township

Laketown Township

Park Township

Zeeland City

Zeeland Township

Other, please specify

____ Don't know

17. Please rank the following factors according to which ones you believe would have the greatest impact on improving people's unmet transit needs?

1 = greatest impact

1 2 3 Don't see great impact

Improving transit services in existing areas

Consolidating transit services

Expanding transit services to new areas

Other, please specify

____ Don't know

18. Please rank the TOP THREE of the following factors according to which you believe would have the greatest impact on meeting people's transportation needs in the existing public transit service area. **Please use each number only once.** 1 = greatest impact.

1 2 3 Not in top three

Increasing accessibility of vehicles

Improving customer service ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Lowering cost of service

Increasing hours of service ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Increasing days of service

Adding amenities (benches, shelters, etc.) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Expanding geographic area covered

Other (please specify) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

____ Don't know

19. In the next three (3) years, do you believe the need for regional transit will be:

Very important

Somewhat important

Not at all important

Don't know

20. To what regional destinations do you believe people will have the greatest need for transit in the next three (3) years? (Please select all that apply.)

Places of employment

Courts

Medical facilities

Churches

Shopping and retail

Don't know

Social service agencies

Other, please specify _____

Schools

(Next)

Please share an anonymous story about someone you know with unmet transit needs, if you have one.

(Next)

If you have any additional comments or questions that you would like to share, please do so below.

(Next)

Thank you very much for your participation!

Please visit the transportation page at www.dnlakeshore.org to view the results of the survey. Results will be posted in June.

www.dnlakeshore.org

Appendix B – Focus Group Protocol

Transit Focus Group

(first six groups)

Agenda

1. Welcome and introductions (3 minutes)
2. Overview of ground rules (3 minutes)
3. Provide project background information (3 minutes)
4. Review survey results from the online transportation survey (7 minutes)
5. Discussion (50 minutes)
 - How does this information compare with the unmet transit needs of the customers or clients you serve?
 - What transportation changes or improvements would allow you/your organization to better service your clients?
 - How might these changes or improvements be paid for? What resources are available?
6. Next steps in the process (7 minutes)
 - How would you like to become involved?
 - How would you like to be informed about the information gathered through this process?
7. Thank you (2 minutes)

Transit Focus Group with Tourism, Government, Education, and Environmental Organizations

Wednesday, May 30
3:00 p.m. to 4:15 p.m.
The Frost Research Center
(100 East 8th Street, Suite 220, downtown Holland)

Agenda

1. Welcome and introductions (3 minutes)
2. Overview of ground rules (3 minutes)
3. Provide project background information (3 minutes)
4. Review survey results from the online transportation survey (7 minutes)
5. Review focus group results (10 minutes)
6. Discussion (40 minutes)
 - How does this information compare with your perception of unmet transit needs?
 - What transportation changes or improvements do you think should be considered to better meet people's transit needs?
 - How might these changes or improvements be paid for? What resources are available?
7. Next steps in the process (7 minutes)
 - How would you like to become involved?
 - How would you like to be informed about the information gathered through this process?
8. Thank you (2 minutes)

Appendix C - Telephone Survey of Individuals With Unmet Transit Needs

C: This is a list of transit providers used in questions below

- Self (drive)
- Self (bike)
- Self (walk)
- Immediate Family
- Extended Family
- Friends
- Neighbors
- Church congregation
- Allegan County Transportation (ACT)
- Ambucab
- American Medical Response (AMR)
- Coleman's Shuttle Service
- Evergreen Commons
- Georgetown Seniors Transportation
- Good Samaritan Ministries/Love Inc.
- Hope Network
- Indian Trails/Greyhound
- J-N-R Taxi
- Macatawa Area Express (MAX)
- MOKA (Muskegon, Ottawa, Kent and Allegan)
- Pioneer Resources Transportation
- Rosebud Taxi
- Other Provider
- (Comment or clarification)
- Not Applicable

Q:v1

Hello, I'm _____ from the Frost Research Center at Hope College. We are conducting a brief survey about local transportation needs.

All of your answers will be kept strictly confidential -- your information will not be connected with your name.

Would you be willing to answer some questions about your transportation situation?

Q:v3

Please tell me about the transportation currently available to you and your family.

Do you or your family have consistent, reliable transportation to get to....

(Caller: read each one and check if they say yes.)

- Work
- School
- Medical Appointments

Shopping
Social Activities (including family events)
Church/Religious Events

For Q:v5 to Q:v15, show Provider list, and Mark all that apply.

Q:v5

Who provides transportation for you or your family to get to work

Q:v7

Who provides transportation for you or your family to get to school

Q:v9

Who provides transportation for you or your family to get to medical appointments

Q:v11

Who provides transportation for you or your family to get to shopping

Q:v13

Who provides transportation for you or your family to get to Social activities (including family events)

Q:v15

Who provides transportation for you or your family to get to Church/Religious events

Q:v17

Are there any other places you or your family need transportation to?

1 = Yes

2 = No

8 = don't know

9 = refused

if (v17 > 1) skip v20

Q:v19

What other location or activity do you or your family need transportation to?

Q:v20

C: Make a list of all providers mentioned above in v5-v15. Then ask 2 questions for each provider mentioned. If (very unlikely) no providers mentioned, skip questions

Q:v21

What things do you like MOST about using _____ for transportation?

Q:v23

What things do you like LEAST about using _____ for transportation?

Q:v100

What changes in your transportation situation would make life easier for you and/or your family? (Caller: Do not read list)

- Get a car
- Expanded area covered by transit system
- Lower cost of rides from transit provider
- Driver's license renewal (cheaper, easier)
- Lower cost of gas for car
- Lower cost vehicle insurance
- Other
- None/Cannot think of any change

Q:v102

If those changes were (that change was) made, what would improve in your or your family's life?

Q:v104

What would an ideal solution to your/your family's transportation needs be?

Q:v105

What is the most you're willing to pay for transportation?

Q:v106

Do you have a valid driver's license?

- 1 = Yes
- 2 = No
- 8 = Don't Know
- 9 = Refused

Q:v108

Do you own or have full-time access to a reliable car or other vehicle?

- 1 = Yes
- 2 = No
- 8 = Don't Know
- 9 = Refused

Q:v110

Which of the following best describes your current employment situation?

- 1 = Employed Full-Time
- 2 = Employed Part-Time
- 3 = Retired
- 4 = Military
- 5 = Student
- 6 = Homemaker
- 7 = Unemployed, seeking work
- 8 = Unemployed, not seeking work
- 9 = Temporary Disability Leave
- 10 = Permanent Disability
- 11 = Other

if (v110 > 2) skip v114

Q:v112

Which shift do you normally work?

- 1 = First Shift (roughly 8-5)
- 2 = Second Shift (roughly 4-midnight)
- 3 = Third Shift (roughly midnight-8)
- 4 = Other schedule
- 8 = Don't Know
- 9 = Refused

Q:v114

Do you or someone in your family require special assistance or accessibility in regards to transportation?

For example, needing assistance walking from the vehicle to the door, or a wheel-chair accessible vehicle.

- 1 = Yes -- (If yes, please explain your special need and what is required)
- 2 = No
- 8 = Don't Know
- 9 = Refused

Q:v116

How old are you?

(enter age, enter 888 for Don't Know and 999 for Refused)

Q:v118

Which best describes your racial or ethnic heritage?

- 1 = White/Caucasian
- 2 = Black/African-American
- 3 = Hispanic/Latina/Latino
- 4 = Native American/American Indian
- 5 = Asian/Pacific Islander
- 6 = Multi-ethnic
- 7 = Other

Q:v120:

Including yourself, how many people live in your household?

(enter number, enter 88 for Don't Know and 99 for Refused)

Q:v122

Again, all of the information collected in this phone call will be kept strictly confidential and not connected with your name.

What is your annual household income?

(enter amount, enter 888888 for Don't Know and 999999 for Refused)

if (v122 < 888887) skip v126

C: If would not give income, ask probe question above/below poverty

C: Calculate poverty line based on household size. If household size refused/DK, skip over probe question

HHM = v120

INCPROBE = ((3400 * (V120-1))+9800)

if (v120 > 87) skip v126

Q: v124

Can you tell me if your annual household income is more or less than \$____

1 = More than that

2 = Less than that

8 = Don't Know

9 = Refused

Q: v126

What is your address? (Caller: Get both street and city/zip.

If they are unwilling to give their street address, ask for the closest major cross streets)

Q: v128

Record gender: (Caller, do not ask unless you really do not know.)

1 = male

2 = female

Q: v130

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your current transportation situation or previous transportation experiences?

(Caller - prompt based on previous comments or enter info you've gotten along the way.)

Q: v132

May we contact you in the future if we need more information?

1 = Yes

2 = No

q: v1000

That's the last question. Thank you very much for participating.

Appendix D – Copy of Need a Ride Survey

Need a ride?																																																												
<p>By answering every question on this survey and turning it in by October 14, you will be entered for a chance to win</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 1.2em; font-weight: bold;">1 of 5 \$100 cash cards!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Prizes will be mailed by October 31.</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Please take this quick 3 minute survey if:</p> <p>1 You have had ANY transportation problems in the past year that have kept you from getting where you needed to go</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">AND</p> <p>2 You live in Holland City, Zeeland City, Holland Township, Zeeland Township, Park Township, Laketown Township or Fillmore Township</p> <p>Your completed survey will be sent to the Frost Research Center at Hope College. Your name will NOT be linked to any answers you share. Disability Network and community partners will use the results to seek solutions.</p>																																																											
<p>1. In the past year, I needed to go to _____ but did not have a ride to get there. (Select all that apply)</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Work <input type="checkbox"/> Visit friends/family <input type="checkbox"/> Social services agency <input type="checkbox"/> Church <input type="checkbox"/> Court/Jail <input type="checkbox"/> Shopping/grocery <input type="checkbox"/> School <input type="checkbox"/> Medical appt. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know/Does not apply </p> <p>2. In the past year, I needed to go to _____ County, but did not have a ride to get there. (Select all that apply)</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Kalamazoo <input type="checkbox"/> Muskegon <input type="checkbox"/> Allegan <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know/ Does not apply <input type="checkbox"/> Ottawa <input type="checkbox"/> Kent <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ </p> <p>3. Transportation would be affordable for me if a one-way ride in greater Holland did not cost more than...</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> \$0 <input type="checkbox"/> 50¢ <input type="checkbox"/> \$1 <input type="checkbox"/> \$2 <input type="checkbox"/> \$3 <input type="checkbox"/> \$4-5 <input type="checkbox"/> \$6-7 <input type="checkbox"/> \$8-10 </p> <p>4. I could get where I need to go if I had transportation on these days and times: (Select all that apply)</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Does not apply 6 am - 10 am - 2 pm - 6 pm - 10 pm - 2 am - 10 am 2 pm 6 pm 10 pm 2 am 6 am </p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%;">Mon.</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tues.</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wed.</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Thurs.</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fri.</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sat.</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sun.</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table> <p>5. In the past year, lack of transportation has prevented me from looking for, getting, or keeping a job.</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure/Don't know </p> <p>6. If I had a choice of public transit options, I would rather use:</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Fixed routes/Catch a Max Yes No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> Demand response/Reserve a Max </p> <p>7. I need an accessible vehicle when I travel. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>8. I need some personal assistance when I travel. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>9. In what city or township do you live?</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Fillmore Twp <input type="checkbox"/> Laketown Twp <input type="checkbox"/> Zeeland City <input type="checkbox"/> Holland City <input type="checkbox"/> Park Twp <input type="checkbox"/> Zeeland Twp <input type="checkbox"/> Holland Twp </p> <p>10. Who completed this survey?</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Self - person who needs transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Caregiver of person who needs transportation </p>	Mon.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Thurs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fri.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sat.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sun.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>11. Please rank up to five top solutions that would best meet your transportation needs.</p> <p> a) Getting my vehicle fixed b) Gas money c) Personal assistance d) My driver's license reinstated e) Car insurance f) Money for bus passes, taxi rides, etc... g) Public transportation that goes to places I need to go and runs on the days and at the times I need to travel h) Accessible features for my vehicle i) Other (please specify): _____ </p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">First solution</td> <td>a b c d e f g h i</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Second solution</td> <td>a b c d e f g h i</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Third solution</td> <td>a b c d e f g h i</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fourth solution</td> <td>a b c d e f g h i</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fifth solution</td> <td>a b c d e f g h i</td> </tr> </table> <p>12. Are you currently using...</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> MAX/Allegan Cty Trans. <input type="checkbox"/> Taxi <input type="checkbox"/> Pioneer Resources <input type="checkbox"/> Friends/Family/Neighbors <input type="checkbox"/> Good Sam./Love Inc. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ </p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Please tell us a little bit about yourself.</p> <p>13. What is your age?</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Under 18 <input type="checkbox"/> 18-29 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-39 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-49 <input type="checkbox"/> 50-59 <input type="checkbox"/> 60-69 <input type="checkbox"/> 70-79 <input type="checkbox"/> 80 and over </p> <p>14. Not including yourself, how many adults live in your home who also need transportation?</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 or more </p> <p>How many children live in your home who also need transportation?</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 or more </p> <p>15. What is your gender? <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female</p> <p>16. What is your name and where do you currently live? <i>(You may skip this question, but you will not be entered in the prize drawing without a name and address.)</i></p> <p>Name and address: _____</p> <p>17. If we may contact you in the future, what is your phone number and/or email address?</p> <p>_____</p> </div>	First solution	a b c d e f g h i	Second solution	a b c d e f g h i	Third solution	a b c d e f g h i	Fourth solution	a b c d e f g h i	Fifth solution	a b c d e f g h i
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Thank You!

Appendix E – Telephone Survey of Taxpayers

Q:v1

Good evening. My name is _____ and I'm calling from the Frost Research Center at Hope College. We are conducting a short survey about local transportation issues for a coalition of social services agencies. Your answers will help us understand public opinion about transportation concerns facing our area. All of your answers will be completely confidential. Do you have just a few minutes to share your thoughts?

Are you at least 18 years old?

(If not 18 ask: "Is there someone 18 or older at home with whom I may speak?")

(If no, ask if there's a better time to call, thank him/her and end call.)

(If a new person comes to the phone, start the introduction again.)

Do you live in: (Don't just ask where they live)

1 = Zeeland City

2 = Zeeland Township

3 = Park Township

4 = Fillmore Township

5 = Laketown Township

None of these areas - "Thank you, we're only surveying residents of these areas"

Q:v3

How much of a problem is traffic congestion in your community, including the greater Holland area? Would you say it is... (Caller: Read options 1-4 only)

1 = very much a problem

2 = somewhat of a problem

3 = a little bit of a problem

4 = not at all a problem

8 = don't know

9 = refused

Q:v5

By choosing good, fair, or poor, please indicate how well each of the following activities would reduce traffic congestion in our area.

Building more roads to accommodate increased traffic

1 = good (method to reduce traffic congestion in our area)

2 = fair

3 = poor

8 = don't know

9 = refused

Q:v7

Widening already existing roads

1 = good (method to reduce traffic congestion in our area)

2 = fair
3 = poor
8 = don't know
9 = refused

Q:v9

Providing public transportation options

1 = good (method to reduce traffic congestion in our area)
2 = fair
3 = poor
8 = don't know
9 = refused

Q:v11

Providing carpooling opportunities

1 = good (method to reduce traffic congestion in our area)
2 = fair
3 = poor
8 = don't know
9 = refused

Q:v13

Currently, how important to you is the need for better transportation options in your area?

Is it...

1 = very important
2 = somewhat important
3 = somewhat unimportant
4 = not at all important
8 = don't know
9 = refused

Q:v15

In general, how important do you think the need for regional transportation will be in the next three years? Will it be...

1 = very important
2 = somewhat important
3 = somewhat unimportant
4 = not at all important
8 = don't know
9 = refused

Q:v17

How needed are public transportation or transportation programs for the following groups in the community? Please use a scale of greatly needed, somewhat needed, a little needed and not at all needed.

For Seniors - are they (public transportation or transportation programs)...

1 = greatly needed

2 = somewhat needed
3 = a little needed
4 = not at all needed
8 = don't know
9 = refused

Q:v19

For People with disabilities - are they...

1 = greatly needed
2 = somewhat needed
3 = a little needed
4 = not at all needed
8 = don't know
9 = refused

Q:v21

For People with low incomes - are they...

1 = greatly needed
2 = somewhat needed
3 = a little needed
4 = not at all needed
8 = don't know
9 = refused

Q:v23

For Youth - are they...

1 = greatly needed
2 = somewhat needed
3 = a little needed
4 = not at all needed
8 = don't know
9 = refused

Q:v25

For People with suspended licenses - are they...

1 = greatly needed
2 = somewhat needed
3 = a little needed
4 = not at all needed
8 = don't know
9 = refused

Q:v27

For Job seekers - are they...

1 = greatly needed
2 = somewhat needed
3 = a little needed
4 = not at all needed

8 = don't know
9 = refused

Q:v29

For Unemployed persons - are they...

1 = greatly needed
2 = somewhat needed
3 = a little needed
4 = not at all needed
8 = don't know
9 = refused

Q:v31

For Other groups - are they...

1 = greatly needed
2 = somewhat needed
3 = a little needed
4 = not at all needed
8 = don't know
9 = refused

Q:v33

If you needed a ride, who would you call?

(Do NOT read answers. Mark all that apply - Use Other as needed)

Parent
Brother or sister
Son or daughter
Other family
Friend
Neighbor
Church member
Macatawa Area Express - MAX
Pioneer Resources

Good Samaritan/Love Inc.
Allegan County Transportation
MOKA
Taxi
Other
No one - I wouldn't call
Don't know
Refused

Q:v35

Next I am going to read you a list of local transportation providers. For each one, please tell me if you think it is a good, fair or poor means of providing transportation for your community. If you are not familiar with the provider, please let me know.

Macatawa Area Express - MAX Bus

1 = good - means of providing transportation for community
2 = fair
3 = poor
4 = good, but doesn't solve all my transportation problems
7 = unfamiliar with provider
8 = don't know
9 = refused

Q:v37

Allegan County Transportation

1 = good - means of providing transportation for community

2 = fair

3 = poor

4 = good, but doesn't solve all my transportation problems

7 = unfamiliar with provider

8 = don't know

9 = refused

Q:v39

Pioneer Resources

1 = good - means of providing transportation for community

2 = fair

3 = poor

4 = good, but doesn't solve all my transportation problems

7 = unfamiliar with provider

8 = don't know

9 = refused

Q:v41

Rosebud Taxi / JNR Taxi

1 = good - means of providing transportation for community

2 = fair

3 = poor

4 = good, but doesn't solve all my transportation problems

7 = unfamiliar with provider

8 = don't know

9 = refused

Q:v43

Good Samaritan Ministries - volunteer driver program

1 = good - means of providing transportation for community

2 = fair

3 = poor

4 = good, but doesn't solve all my transportation problems

7 = unfamiliar with provider

8 = don't know

9 = refused

Q:v45

Friends and family

1 = good - means of providing transportation for community

2 = fair

3 = poor

4 = good, but doesn't solve all my transportation problems

7 = unfamiliar with provider

8 = don't know
9 = refused

Q:v47

Church members/volunteers

1 = good - means of providing transportation for community
2 = fair
3 = poor
4 = good, but doesn't solve all my transportation problems
7 = unfamiliar with provider
8 = don't know
9 = refused

Q:v49

Is there some other local transportation provider that you can think of?

1 = yes
2 = no
8 = don't know
9 = refused
if (v49 > 1) skip to v55

Q:v51

What provider would that be?

Q:v53

How is ____ (provider's name, or "that provider") as a means of providing transportation for the community?

1 = good
2 = fair
3 = poor
4 = good, but doesn't solve all my transportation problems
7 = unfamiliar with provider
8 = don't know
9 = refused

Q:v55

In the past year have you or someone you know had an unmet transportation need?

A transportation need could be:

not having access to a reliable vehicle when you need it;

not having a current driver's license;

insurance for your vehicle;

money for gas;

money for bus or taxi fare;

no public transportation where you live or where you need to go; or

needing special assistance or accessible features in your transportation.

1 = yes
2 = no
8 = don't know

9 = refused

if (v55 > 1) skip to v59

Q:v57

Could you please share what your or their unmet transportation needs were?

(Mark all that apply)

Do not have access to a reliable vehicle when needed

Do not have a current driver's license

Do not have insurance for vehicle

Do not have money for gas

Do not have money for bus or taxi fare

Do not have money to get car fixed/maintain car

No public transportation where I/they live or where I/they need to go

I/they need special assistance or accessible features in transportation

Other (specify)

Don't know

Refused

Q:v59

If public transportation were available in your community how likely would you be to use it, very likely, somewhat likely or not at all likely?

1 = very likely

2 = somewhat likely

3 = not at all likely

8 = don't know/undecided

9 = refused

Q:v61

If public transportation were available in your community, how likely would it be that other family members beyond yourself would use it, very likely, somewhat likely or not at all likely?

1 = very likely

2 = somewhat likely

3 = not at all likely

7 = no family in community

8 = don't know/undecided

9 = refused

Q:v63

Next, I'm going to read you a list of challenges that public transportation or transportation programs is expected to resolve in communities. Please indicate how important you think each is to YOUR CITY OR TOWNSHIP, by indicating if it is very important, somewhat important, somewhat unimportant, or not at all important.

Helping people with disabilities get to their jobs

1 = very important

2 = somewhat important

3 = somewhat unimportant

4 = not at all important

8 = don't know/undecided
9 = refused

Q:v65

Helping people transition from welfare to work by providing transportation

1 = very important
2 = somewhat important
3 = somewhat unimportant
4 = not at all important
8 = don't know/undecided
9 = refused

Q:v67

Transporting customers and employees of local businesses

1 = very important
2 = somewhat important
3 = somewhat unimportant
4 = not at all important
8 = don't know/undecided
9 = refused

Q:v69

Transporting seniors to medical facilities

1 = very important
2 = somewhat important
3 = somewhat unimportant
4 = not at all important
8 = don't know/undecided
9 = refused

Q:v71

Transporting the unemployed and underemployed to employment and training opportunities

1 = very important
2 = somewhat important
3 = somewhat unimportant
4 = not at all important
8 = don't know/undecided
9 = refused

Q:v73

Providing transportation options that support the conservation of land

1 = very important
2 = somewhat important
3 = somewhat unimportant
4 = not at all important
8 = don't know/undecided
9 = refused

Q:v75

Providing transportation options to help reduce traffic congestion

- 1 = very important
- 2 = somewhat important
- 3 = somewhat unimportant
- 4 = not at all important
- 8 = don't know/undecided
- 9 = refused

Q:v77

Providing transportation options to help reduce environmental pollution

- 1 = very important
- 2 = somewhat important
- 3 = somewhat unimportant
- 4 = not at all important
- 8 = don't know/undecided
- 9 = refused

Q:v79

Is there any one item from this list that you feel your tax dollars should specifically support?

(Ask for ONE, but they can choose up to three responses, if needed)

Helping people with disabilities get to their jobs

Helping people transition from welfare to work by providing transportation

Transporting customers and employees of local businesses

Transporting seniors to medical facilities

Transporting unemployed/underemployed to employment/training opportunities

Providing transportation options that support the conservation of land

Providing transportation options to help reduce traffic congestion

Providing transportation options to help reduce environmental pollution

None

All

Don't know

Refused

Q:v81

How soon would you like city or township officials to address public transportation issues within your community?

- 1 = Within 1 year
- 2 = Within 3 years
- 3 = Within 5 years
- 4 = Over 5 years
- 5 = Would not like this issue addressed
- 8 = Don't know
- 9 = Refused

Q:v83

If you learned that there are people who live in your community who do not have adequate transportation, how much would you be willing to invest each year to help people get rides to where they need to go?

(Caller: Read each line 1-6 until they say no; mark each yes answer)

1. Would you be willing to invest some amount under \$25 per year?
2. Would you be willing to invest \$25 per year?
3. Would you be willing to invest \$40 per year?
4. Would you be willing to invest \$75 per year?
5. Would you be willing to invest \$100 per year?
6. Would you be willing to invest over \$100 per year?

Not willing to invest anything

Other -- use only if they wish to make comment on this question

Don't know

Refused

Q:v85

If your city/township developed a transportation plan that would help people in your community get rides where they need to go, and it would cost the owner of a home with a taxable value of \$100,000 up to \$40 per year, how much would you support or oppose the plan?

- 1 = strongly support
- 2 = somewhat support
- 3 = somewhat oppose
- 4 = strongly oppose
- 8 = don't know
- 9 = refused

Q:v87

What information would you need to know about transportation service improvements to help you make this decision? (Caller: Open ended responses -- if they mention any of these, mark them, otherwise use "Other")

Number of people served

Details about types of people served (elderly, disabled, unemployed, students)

Geographic area served

Destinations served

Methods used (buses, covering volunteers' costs, agency coordination, etc.)

Other

Q:v89

I have just three questions about you, and then we're finished.

Please indicate the range into which your age falls. Are you...

- 1 = 18 to 24
- 2 = 25 to 30
- 3 = 31 to 49
- 4 = 50 to 65
- 5 = Over 65

8 = Don't know
9 = Refused

Q:v91
(Caller: record gender. Ask only if absolutely needed.)
1 = Male
2 = Female

Q:v93
Do you currently own or rent your home?
1 = Own
2 = Rent
8 = Don't know
9 = Refused

Q:v95
Keeping in mind that your answers are confidential and will only be used in the aggregate, which of the following ranges contains your annual household income?
1 = Less than \$25,000 per year
2 = \$26,000 - \$50,000
3 = \$51,000 - \$75,000
4 = Over \$75,000 per year
8 = Don't know
9 = Refused

Q:v97
Is there anything else you would like to say about what we talked about today?
(IF NO, LEAVE BLANK!)

Q:v99
That concludes our survey. Thank you very much for your time. Good-bye.

Indicate area code
1 = 269
2 = 616

Q:v101
Carefully enter 7-digit phone number, no dashes, just the numbers.